

The Baptist Record

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Published Since 1877

JACKSON MISSISSIPPI, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1982

Volume CVI, Number 44

Resolutions vary widely

Cooperative Program popular at most Baptist conventions

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Increasing support for the Cooperative Program, opposing government directed or scheduled prayers, and tuition tax credits were the most common themes as the 34 state conventions of the Southern Baptist Convention met.

By the time the final budgets had been adopted 20 conventions had increased the percentage of their collections they will send on to national and worldwide missionary and educational causes through the Cooperative Program, the SBC's unified, voluntary giving program.

Noteworthy in the group were the Hawaii convention that approved its first increase in CP giving since 1952 (jumping two percent to 27 percent), Michigan that voted its 12th consecutive yearly increase of one-half of one percent (to 26 percent), Nevada which increased two percent (to 18 percent) and Oklahoma which climbed to 45 percent with a one-percent increase.

Insistence

Historic Baptist insistence on the separation of church and state was reflected in votes on government involvement in structuring school prayers or prayer time and a proposal to give tax credits to parents who send their children to private schools.

Seven states, Alabama, Arkansas, California, Maryland, Missouri, South Carolina, and Tennessee approved resolutions opposing such tax credits.

Opposition to "government directed or scheduled prayers" or statements that the "First Amendment is sufficient" and "the Supreme Court has never outlawed voluntary prayer" surfaced in resolutions adopted by messengers in Alabama, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, Tennessee,

Texas and Virginia while calls for separation of church and state were adopted in Arkansas, California and Washington, D.C.

Other widespread resolution topics included raising the legal drinking age to 21 (five states), working toward peace (seven states), relieving hunger (six states), and opposing gambling (five states).

Most states reported quiet conventions with little debate.

Louisiana messengers opposed the teaching of "any religious dogma" either supported or opposed by Louisiana Baptists in public schools (even Creationism), opposed President Reagan's prayer amendment, and adopted 12 other resolutions without debate.

Georgia adopted its budget, heard what was expected to be a controversial executive committee report and went through the entire resolution process without any debate and Mississippi took no action on two controversial resolutions, one attacking the Reader's Digest Bible and another calling for an investigation of Mississippi College in relationship to its law school.

Heated debate

The major exception was in Arkansas where messengers waged heated debates over two resolutions. The first, a call for Southern Seminary in Louisville to fire professor Dale Moody because of his views on apostasy (losing one's salvation) passed overwhelmingly but not before name calling and harshness marred the convention.

The second issue, a recommendation to allow Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, Ark. to move from

junior college status to four-year status failed by 42 votes, 417-459.

Messengers didn't argue at the Kansas-Nebraska Convention but they did spark controversy when they adopted a resolution critical of James Dunn and the organization he heads, the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

"Embarrassed"

The resolution said Dunn's outspoken opposition to the prayer amendment and his association with People For The American Way had "embarrassed" Southern Baptists and if he failed to start reflecting the feelings of the majority of Southern Baptists then the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention should terminate the SBC's relationship with the BJCPA (the SBC contributes approximately 80 percent of the BJCPA's budget).

North Carolina stood outside the

norm for 1982 two ways—it had aggressive debate and it was the lone Baptist state convention to endorse the prayer amendment. North Carolina messengers backed the President's proposal by a 506-308 vote in one of the last items of business considered. North Carolina was also the only convention to adopt a highly restrictive abortion resolution.

That measure opposed abortion except to save the physical life of the mother. South Carolina defeated a similar resolution while messengers in Alabama and Texas repeated traditional Southern Baptist stances opposing "social abortion" or "abortion on demand" but accepting the need for the procedure "to protect the mental or physical health of the mother or in cases of rape and incest."

The norm of electing a pastor as president was ignored in two states. (Continued on page 2)

Mississippi witness in Uruguay



Pastor Charles Harvey of Shady Grove Church is on the bicycle at left as he and Missionary Don Davis are on the move witnessing in the city of Mercedes in Uruguay. The Mississippi team members visiting there handed out tracts, gave testimonies, preached, and sang.

Mississippi giving totals \$12,465,589

November gifts from Mississippi Baptist churches to the Cooperative Program totaled \$1,276,621, according to an announcement by Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

These gifts bring the total for 11 months in 1982 to \$12,465,589, which is only \$294,869 under the pro rata amount expected for 11 months.

The November total is the fourth highest month of giving in Mississippi Baptist history behind only September gifts of \$1,301,167; June's \$1,287,260; and December 1981's \$1,326,332.

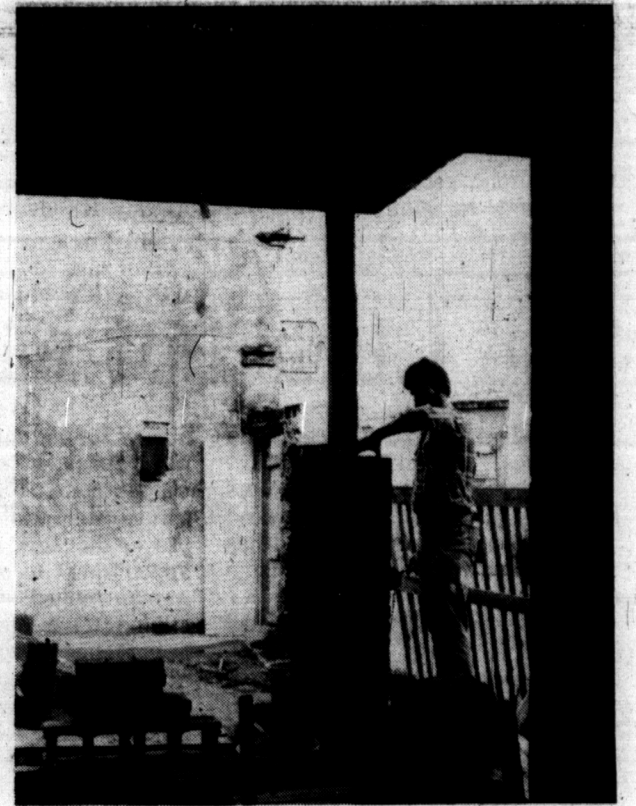
November's gifts for this year made a 50.9 percent jump over the offering received in November of 1981.

And gifts for January through November of 1982 have made an 11.2 percent increase over the first 11 months of 1981. The total budget for 1982, \$13,920,500, calls for an 11 percent increase over 1981's giving.

"As we enter the Christmas season," said Kelly, "Mississippi Baptists are sure to remember the basis for celebration which is the birth of Christ, the greatest gift of all time."



In November four members of Shady Grove Church in George Association went to Mercedes, Uruguay, to help in the construction of a church building. They were Randy Easterling, Mr. and Mrs. Lester Cochran, and Pastor Charles Harvey. The Mississippi team worked with Missionary Don Davis and church members to put a roof on the building, lay blocks and bricks, and install windows and doors. In the photo above a roofing tile is raised.



Randy Easterling of Shady Grove Church builds a brick column. The Mississippians report that a great deal of work is still needed on the building before services can be held there. Mercedes is a city of 55,000, and this building houses the only Baptist work in the city. The Mississippi team said the church membership is small and the people hard to reach. The Shady Grove members went to Uruguay in response to an article in the Baptist Record.



New officers of the Executive Committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board are, left to right, Alton Yarbrough, vice-chairman; Mrs. W. H. Yates, secretary; and Louis Smith, chairman.



Gandy

Pickering

Mrs. Curtis

Board elects officers, approves counseling

By Don McGregor

Charles Pickering, Laurel attorney, was re-elected president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; and Louis Smith, pastor of First Church, Canton, was elected chairman of the board's Executive Committee last week during meetings of the two bodies.

The board also established a counseling program for ministers and their families in which the board will share in the cost of the counseling sessions.

As vice-president the board elected L. Edward Gandy, pastor of First Church, Kosciusko; and the Executive Committee named Alton Yarbrough, minister of education at First Church, Grenada, as vice-president.

Secretaries for the two bodies are Mrs. Elise Curtis of Gulfport for the Convention Board and Mrs. W. H. Yates of Eupora for the Executive Committee.

Ex officio

Convention Board officers are ex officio members of the Executive Committee. Other Executive Committee members elected by the Convention Board were Anthony Kay, pastor of First Church, Calhoun City; Dan Thompson, pastor of First Church, Ackerman; Harold Ishee, pastor of Plainway Church, Laurel; Ronnie Massey, layman of Meridian; Eddie L. Hamilton, pastor of First Church, Carthage; Charles Bagwell, pastor of Mt. Vernon Church, Columbus; Charles Hollifield, pastor of Liberty Church, Liberty; Jimmy Vance, pastor of Calvary Church, Starkville; and James T. Bryant, pastor of First Church, Taylorsville.

During the Convention Board meeting reports were heard from the Education Commission, the Church-Minister Relations Advisory Committee, the New Church Expansion Committee, and the Committee on Board Organization. The Education Commission report was presented in the Baptist Record following the recent Education Commission meeting.

The Convention Board adopted the report of the Church-Minister Relations

Advisory Committee, which established a ministers' care program. It will be a program of cost-sharing pastoral counseling for ministers and their families. The program is set up to get under way on Jan. 1, 1983.

Any person who is "engaged in a full-time church related service on a ministerial level" will be eligible. Only wives and children will be included in the families.

The counselors will be approved by the Executive Committee, and the cost will be shared between the minister and the Convention Board. The board's portion of the cost will be fixed by the Executive Committee. The remaining portion of the counseling fee will be negotiated between the counselor and the applicant.

A minister or a family member may take advantage of the service by calling an approved counselor, who will in turn notify the director of Church-Minister Relations and Annuity. Sessions will be limited to 12.

The New Church Expansion Committee reported spending \$18,500 for 3.7 acres in Philadelphia and moving a mobile chapel on it, appropriating \$40,000 for a five-acre site at White Cypress Lakes in Hancock County, providing a mobile chapel for Liberty Church in Winston Association after the church building was destroyed by fire, purchasing two mobile chapels for \$45,320, transferring a mobile chapel from Magnolia Street Church in Laurel to the new Community Baptist Church there, deciding to purchase two acres and a house for \$27,500 for Moss Hill Mission in Union County Association and to provide a mobile chapel, and appropriating \$2,400 for three lots in Bayside Park five miles west of Waveland.

Loan to school

The committee also loaned a mobile chapel to Taylorsville school after destruction of the school by arson. The committee reported that the Convention Board owns 10 mobile chapels which have been or are being used to begin 24 churches. The 10 chapels cost

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Financial crises

If you're not there when people need you...

(The Baptist Record has done a survey of how emergency needs are being met in Mississippi. This is a report of the findings.)

By Tim Nicholas

In addition to the hard hitting effects of several years of multi-digit inflation, Americans are suffering from a more direct loss of income, unemployment. The just announced November figures total 10.8 percent of the nation's work force (a 4 percent jump from October) as unemployed.

However, figures for Mississippi rank higher than the national average. Joe McDonald of the State Employment and Security Commission reports a Mississippi rate of 12.2 percent as of October, with at least six counties having more than one in five members of the work force out of work.

McDonald says this is 129,700 persons seeking work out of a total work force of 1,064,700.

Is there now in Mississippi a greater need that is affecting Baptist churches? Are churches being called upon to provide more help now to those in financial crisis? A quick, unscien-

tific survey by the Baptist Record yields mixed responses.

Baptist leaders in several of the counties with higher percentages of unemployment report no increases in requests for food or other financial aid.

George Lee, director of missions for Walthall County, which, with Winston, ranked highest in the state with 21.7 percent unemployed, says that Walthall pastors tell him that through kinship, unemployment compensation, and being in a rural area, the economic blow is softened. Lee says rural areas don't have as high a number of transients asking for help as do the cities.

Lee explains that the local ministerial association works in crisis help through the Salvation Army, which a large number of Baptist groups work with. However, says Lee, "It bothers me we have developed no program to help face financial crises."

Apparently, Mississippi Baptists, neither church or association, have any full time program of crisis help, and only a few centers where people can go to get food, clothing, or any other financial help.

One of the few mission centers Baptists run in Mississippi is operated by the Hinds-Madison Association in Jackson. Christian Social ministries director, David Myers says the center is open two hours a day and all day in the summers when summer missionaries are on duty.

"No question, there are more people hungry."

Myers says he and center director Luther Tucker have a constant need of volunteers to keep the center open and there is a great need for children's clothing right now. The center can put food baskets together with advance notice and at Christmas, most requests are moved through the Salvation Army's Christmas Clearing House which prevents duplication of assistance by church groups.

Myers says one problem in the helping ministry is that some would call the center wanting to help a "worthy" family. Involved in that concept, says Myers, is the idea of helping other middle class, white people, with the

same work ethic and morality that the helpers have. "The people who have needs aren't just like us," says Myers, "nor are they Christian. That's when we start stepping over into the mission aspects of it."

Myers explains that part of what the mission is trying to do is "grow people to see the need of missions. . . that's very hard work."

He would like to see perhaps a fund or collection of groceries where everybody in a church would bring one can of food every week so that several families could eat until they get work. "It wouldn't break any of us. The church could give a voucher to a family and let them pick out what they need for a week."

Paul Vandercook Christian social ministries director for the Gulf Coast association, reports a definite rise in requests for help. "No question, there are more people hungry," says Vandercook. "I've had more calls myself in the last month than in the last couple of years, totally." He says the pastors of highly visible churches report more people asking for help daily.

Several Gulf Coast churches are helping out their own membership, as are churches in most areas, and Vandercook says a couple of crisis closets are "on the drawing boards." But the biggest operation for Vandercook right now is distribution of the Christmas in August gifts he received from the missions groups around the country. The more than 500 boxes of canned goods, staples, and such came for the international ministries, but Vandercook is letting a couple of churches distribute it to the needy. "We see a great big need that we're not meeting," says Vandercook.

Jerry Stevens, director of missions for Winston County, with 21.7 percent unemployment, reports that most requests for benevolence are referred to the Christian Friends Society, an ecumenical group composed of most of the churches in the county. The society has a clothing store, with food, toys, and "most people in need have learned to go there for help," says Stevens.

Every Thanksgiving the participating churches have a special share day

where a dollar per church member is asked. This year, 1,300 Christmas boxes will be provided to the needy. The boxes include groceries, staples, and for the first time, toys. Requests must come from a pastor and, though "Baptists have been sort of slow to get into this," says Stevens, fully half the churches participate. The boxes are put together from purchased goods and repaired toys at First Church, Louisville, and the county's board of supervisors distributes them on a certain day to the homes. Stevens reports that as of Dec. 1, only 16 requests for Christmas boxes had been made.

Perhaps one of the best Christmas-time operations is the service by the Salvation Army called Christmas Clearing House. It consists of Salvation Army volunteers in a city gathering requests for help from various helping agencies.

Margaret Winters, a Presbyterian who is a volunteer with the Salvation Army Auxiliary, says that more than 1,700 families in the metro Jackson area were adopted out last year; more

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"If you're not there when people need you ..."

(Continued from page 1)

are expected this year. Churches phone in for names of families needing help and take responsibilities for helping the families with the Christmas needs. This system keeps duplication of services from occurring.

Besides this project in a number of Mississippi cities, the Salvation Army in Jackson operates a toy shop where people give dressed dolls and filled stockings for needy families. The clearing house gives out toy cards and mothers go there to shop for toys for their children.

Paul Fuller, social services director for the Salvation Army in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama, says his agency is running an 80 percent increase of people seeking emergency help over last year.

"We're going to get taken, but we have a real assurance that we're going to catch a lot of people who fall in the cracks," he says.

Joint projects

Fuller tells of a number of areas where Baptist groups and Salvation Army workers have joint projects, like in afterschool help. "After initial needs are met by us and they are not in crisis, Baptist churches have taken people under their wings."

First Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, proclaimed Dec. 12 as White Christmas Sunday. They have placed two barrels outside the church office where members may deposit canned food, toys, or other gifts. The barrels will be given to the Salvation Army, which will then distribute them to jails, nursing homes, or to needy families.

Fuller is "a firm believer that a Christian witness helps—that person's recognition of Christ is a benefit. You may not ever see the results, but you've got to have the faith that it's there or we'd all be pumping gas somewhere." Fuller says his people "really do try to let them know why we're doing this—out of the love of God and his directions to care. Hopefully, with additional followup, that's where the additional spreading of the Word can be greatly enhanced."

Fuller adds a personal note. "Crisis intervention is an entity to people business. The cycle of poverty is broken when you turn that to a people to people type relationship."

Jim Fagan, a social worker for Mississippi Catholic Charities, reports that just last Friday, he saw 27 families that wanted emergency help. He has noticed a greater need. The worst cases, he says is when people have no place to live but in cars. "They can't take a bath," he says, and cannot present themselves neatly for job applications. "They haven't got a chance."

Fagan says he would like to see 20 or so big churches get together to provide emergency housing for the un-

employed. "This could be done," he says.

All around the state are examples of where Baptists are participating with other groups to help people in need, such as in feeding the hungry. Two examples are in Jackson and Pascagoula where feeding programs are in existence operated by groups of churches. The two programs feed upwards of 200 persons each day. The Baptist Record plans a report on these two programs in next week's issue.

In Hernando, there is a United Fund, that six or seven denominations participate in, says Ervin Brown, director of missions for Northwest Association. Money is given at Easter and Thanksgiving joint services and a treasurer gives money to families for emergencies when referred by a participating pastor.

Within Baptist churches are still new attempts to help those within the membership who are having financial crises.

David Bookout, pastor of East Louisville Church in Winston County, says the church has a budgeted item for helping people in financial need, whether members or not. The church took a check to a family whose home burned to the ground recently. "They needed a Christian witness. They were not attending any church." Bookout says the church's philosophy is "if you're not there when people need you, they won't come later when they don't."

30 widows

The church has 30 widows who are looked after regularly by people who phone to make sure they can pay their bills. "People are beginning to notice we do love people, we do care for them," says Bookout.

Wednesday evenings, the more than 100 persons who attend services (they only have about 140 in Sunday School) are divided into three groups who all pray for others on three lists: sick, prospects for the church, and the unsaved. "We've seen results from each," says Bookout.

"If the church was doing what it should be doing, we would be meeting all the needs of people and we wouldn't have to have a lot of these government agencies," he adds.

The Gulf Coast Rescue Mission is situated between Biloxi and Gulfport and is run by a Baptist minister, John Christy. He can house nearly 60 in his men's and women's dormitories and in what he calls the family violence center.

The independently operated ministry is run totally by donations, which come mostly from Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Assemblies of God.

The method of help is in shelter and active Christian witness. "We show there is a better way of life by giving one's life to Jesus Christ," says Christy. Residents go to church some-

where every night they stay at the center.

Local people receive help from the center, too. Christy reports a 40 percent increase of requests for help since last year. "We help them with rent, utilities, food, clothing, and we try to fill prescriptions for them," he says.

First Baptist Church in Jackson which participates in the Jackson feeding kitchen, helps to feed people at a hospital hospitality house where families of patients stay, and helps numbers of walk-ins who ask for help.

Agencies need volunteers, too

Government agencies which help people in financial trouble could use some help. Linda Harvey who directs the Governor's Office of Community Services, which funds 20 service agencies across the state, says potential volunteers should phone her collect at 354-6099 in Jackson to see who needs help and where. These organizations need volunteers to help with such as legal counsel for applying for utility help, with education in drug and alcohol projects, counselors, therapists or lay people who could work in youth instruction for drug programs, van drivers to deliver hot meals, locations and volunteers for serving hot lunches and providing recreation for people who are alone, volunteers to help with screening people for housing assistance. Miss Harvey said she wonders if anyone has ideas for development of a network for standby shelters in emergency situations. She also notes that adult basic education is going by the boards because money is not available.

has announced a new program for members in financial straits. Bob Patterson, chairman of the deacons, explains that unemployed members will be recommended to a confidential committee through either Patterson or Schuyler Batson, the associate pastor. "Nobody will know what guidelines are or who or how much aid will be given," says Patterson. "The concern is not to try to maintain standards of living, but to try to provide as much support as they can." The program is funded with "over and above" gifts.

Patterson, who is a vice president at Unifirst Federal Savings and Loan, says that advisers are concerned less with the ending of unemployment compensation, and more with the fact that "so many of these jobs in Mississippi are permanently lost." One oil company in Attala County which formerly employed over 1,000, now employs only about 50.

"Unemployment will remain very high with a labor pool largely unskilled

... nor do they have high bargaining power unless we return to a very robust economy," says Patterson.

For Baptists, providing substantial help in this situation is "pretty well out of our ball park." He says it will take business and community action reaching out to bring industry in to replace the industry that is lost.

Unruly kids included in "our calling"

Becky Williams of First Church, Gautier, ministers in a place "hidden within her own community. My community doesn't know about this community," says Mrs. Williams, wife of the Gautier pastor.

The ministry is at a subsidized housing project where she and other women from First Church lead a Big A club on Monday afternoons. She started in a trailer park with the Bible study materials which assume little knowledge of the Bible or even of Jesus. Now other women in the church lead in the park while Mrs. Williams helps minister to the 35 or so kids who flood a tiny trailer in the project. It's an unruly group of kids, but eager to participate in whatever the volunteers are doing there.

"These are children who are not church, from the lowest income group," says Mrs. Williams who adds that about 60 percent are black, with most of the rest white and some other racial groups thrown in.

The owners said they could use the empty trailer but they had to get permission from the planning commission and board of supervisors before the trailer could be occupied even for the Monday afternoons when the women come.

"I was amazed that some didn't know the Christmas story," says Mrs. Williams who notes that this year the kids will act out the story with a black Mary and a black Joseph.

"We do find needs there," she says. She learned there is a family or two that has a need for food. When that happens the church's food closet is used.

Mrs. Williams reports that volunteers tend to get involved with the kids. There's Ronald—"full of mischief... I see in him a lot of ability to learn and share... I see a lot of promise in that kid," she says. Another one she says has a natural artistic ability.

The frequent moves of the people in the community makes the need to quickly share the love of Christ more important. "This may be their only time to hear of Jesus," she says.

Church members fund any project that comes up in connection with the Big A clubs, says Mrs. Williams. But "the greatest need is spiritual," she says.

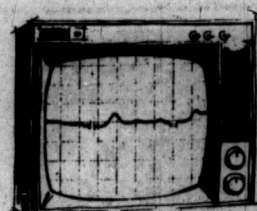
And she has ideas. "We're going to need to expand. There's a need for tutorial services and work with the parents. The problem will be in getting permission for more space." She explains that perhaps the church will need to rent an apartment there in the project. It's always going to be an area with great need. "That's our calling as Christians," she says, "to reach out to people in need."

First woman trustee endows

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — More than \$1 million will be added to the endowment of The Southern Seminary as the result of the generosity of Mary Jo Gheens Hill, first woman trustee of the seminary, who died last June at her home here. Her legacy for the seminary, which is in addition to more than \$750,000 in gifts made during her lifetime, will support a variety of needs.

Intensive care

Dedicated to strengthening families
Directed by a team of family life specialists



On teaching moral and spiritual values

We hear a lot about a return to old-fashioned morality, whatever that means. How do we teach moral and spiritual values in the family? O.F.D.

In addition to teaching Bible stories and Bible principles, the best way Christian parents teach is by example.

In a conference here in Mississippi, Dr. Evelyn Duvall, a respected family life specialist, suggested that one of the best teaching devices with children is the phrase, "We are the kind of people who..." The child may ask, "Why do we go to church on Sunday?" The parents don't go. "The parent replies, 'Well, when Sunday comes, we are the kind of people who go to

church.' The child may say, 'Why don't we drink beer? Our neighbors have it all the time.' Reply: 'We are the kind of people who don't drink alcoholic beverages and beer is like other liquor or wine in that enough will make you drunk,' or 'Some people become addicted and want more. We are the kind of people who don't want to be like that.' Put your own necessary ending to the statement. You will find that your children will catch on as you back up your words by consistent example.

Address inquiries to Intensive Care, the Baptist Record, Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.

Cooperative Program popular at most Baptist conventions

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Virginia and South Carolina.

Christine Gregory, a six-term president of the Woman's Missionary Union and a former first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention, became the first woman president of the Baptist General Association of Virginia. Her election was even more unusual in that she was elected without opposition.

South Carolina wasn't as uncommon since newly-elected president B. F. Hawkins was a pastor for 30 years. He retired last year after 10 years as director of Stewardship and Cooperative Program promotion for the South Carolina convention.

Illinois elected its first black president, Don Sharp, a Chicago pastor. Other highlights from state conventions included:

Florida established a debt ceiling for all convention buildings of \$5 million with an annual amortization ceiling of \$75,000.

Louisiana voted to move into partnership with Nevada Baptists and with Zimbabwe.

Maryland adopted a plan to increase its Cooperative Program percentage based on the inflation rate and state convention receipts—for every one percent state receipts increase above the inflation rate, CP giving to the na-

tional level jumps one-half of a percent; Missouri passed resolutions urging that a church's support of the Cooperative Program be considered before electing or appointing that church's pastor to leadership positions within the convention and asking that convention presidents use their appointive power fairly;

Northern Plains made plans to "become the only SBC state convention to dissolve" with final steps approved for Wyoming to split away to form a separate convention, the Montana fellowship being recognized and the encouragement of the establishment of a Dakota fellowship to include North and South Dakota;

South Carolina voted to move into partnership with Puerto Rico and, "by 1984 maybe the Virgin Islands" to help promote Southern Baptist work;

Tennessee established conditions in providing for ministers who are forced to resign from their church, funding a plan that will pay the pastor \$100 a week for 13 weeks.

And West Virginia accepted two churches from Virginia and one from Kentucky into its convention. (See separate story, page 6.)

"Sometimes trials come not to prove your faith, but to improve it." Brian Harbour.

The Christian witness comes in

It's good to help those who can't help themselves," says Mrs. Johnny Brewer, a member of First Church, Moss Point. She is working with a divorced woman who has three kids and has only found part time work bringing in about \$70 per week.

Mrs. Brewer said the woman had contacted the Home of Grace, a rehabilitation center which has board members from the Moss Point church. The woman knew the center had a rummage outlet. They put the two women in contact.

The woman has no phone and she sold her car to keep the utilities going. Her daughter needed a hearing aid and Mrs. Brewer, who works for a doctor, is helping that need to be filled. She also helped get the family into Medicaid and helped outfit the kids.

The Christian witness comes in reg-

ularly. Driving the woman to the doctor's office, Mrs. Brewer told the woman that God has a way of working things out; that it was answered prayer that they were able to get an appointment to see the doctor. The woman replied, "I think God's been talking to me lately." She said she'd been feeling sorry for herself, feeling nobody in the world cared what happened to her, when she found a box of goods on her porch. Mrs. Brewer had left the stuff there. When she told Mrs. Brewer this, Mrs. Brewer said, "I care and someone that created us cares. He created us with a need for him. Until that need is met by him, you're not going to be fulfilled."

Mrs. Brewer is inviting the woman and her children to her Sunday School class' Christmas party, an informal gathering of families. "We're going to

buy Christmas for the kids," she says.

"I get myself in pickles like this all the time," she says, for certain grinning on her end of the telephone interview with the Baptist Record. "I'm one of 11 children. Our parents loved us real good, but couldn't give a lot of material things. God has given me a wonderful family."

Her earlier comment about how good it is to help those who can't help themselves is followed by "This is what living is all about. Unless we're out there helping our neighbors, we're not doing what God wants us to do."

She says her new friend tells her of people who are living in cars, a comment echoed by social service workers in Jackson, too. "People are hurting real bad," says Mrs. Brewer. "We just don't realize how bad off people are."

Fellowships work toward organizing

MANDAN, N. D. (BP)—Messengers to the Northern Plains Baptist Convention planned toward new units—both new congregations and new state conventions—as they met at Baptist Temple in Mandan, Oct. 27-28.

The convention—currently composed of four states—will divide into two conventions next year when the Wyoming Baptist Convention is constituted. Also, messengers officially recognized the Montana Baptist Fellowship and encouraged the formation of a Dakota Baptist Fellowship, encompassing North and South Dakota.

Northern Plains

The Wyoming fellowship, made up of 54 churches and 14 church-type missions, will organize as a convention during the Northern Plains annual meeting, Oct. 19-20, 1983.

The Montana fellowship, composed of 58 congregations, has been meeting several years but was not officially recognized until this year. Larry Gandy, pastor of Rimrock Baptist Church in Billings, is president of the fellowship. Gandy is a Mississippian. Mississippi once had a formal working relationship with Montana.

During the 1982 convention representatives of Dakotas churches initiated a Dakota fellowship, naming a committee to be made up of the moderators of the four associations in South Dakota and the moderator and vice moderator of the two North Dakota associations.

Informally, the Montana and Dakota fellowships will form into state conventions when both reach sufficient numerical and financial strength to support separate units. Until then the three states will continue to work together as the Northern Plains convention.

New England

NASHUA, N.H. (BP)—Messengers to the annual meeting of the Baptist General Association of New England have set Nov. 3-5, 1983, as the date they will organize into a state convention.

Although the association, which is affiliated with the Baptist Convention of Maryland, met Southern Baptist Convention guidelines for state convention status this year, it was declared to postpone organizing as a

convention until 1983, which is the 200th anniversary year of the birth of Luther Rice, a pioneer mission leader.

During the annual meeting, messengers were told the association now has 100 congregations—69 constituted churches—and 31 church-type missions—and some 12,000 members. Under SBC guidelines, a fellowship must have 12,000 members in 50 congregations or 10,000 members in 70 congregations to be granted recognition.

Minn.-Wisc.

MILWAUKEE, Wis. (BP)—Minnesota-Wisconsin Southern Baptists, during the 13th annual session at Northwest Baptist Church, launched a "Double-in-a-Decade" emphasis and looked toward organization as a regional convention to begin operation Jan. 1, 1984.

Focus of the meeting was the "Double-in-a-Decade" emphasis, the Minnesota-Wisconsin expression of Bold Mission Thrust. By strengthening present congregations and starting 120 new chapels they hope to double the overall SBC impact in the region by the

end of 1992. This will be accomplished through linking relationships of Minnesota-Wisconsin and Texas churches. Texas has been sponsoring conventions for Minnesota-Wisconsin since 1966.

Latest reports show 11,984 members in 70 churches and 36 chapels. Sunday School enrollment showed a 14 percent increase last year. There were 856 baptisms.

Women's retreats reflect growth

LAKE YOJOA, Honduras—Record attendance at three retreats at the Lake Yojoa Baptist Encampment may reflect growth trends in churches of the Honduras Baptist Convention, says Joyce Harms, Southern Baptist missionary and president of the Honduran Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

Nearly 180 women attended the national women's retreat, an increase in attendance of 50 percent over last year. More than 300 youths and leaders taxed the camp facility a week earlier during a national youth retreat.



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Theological controversy

Moody defends apostasy position

By Dale Moody

Note: At the request of Dale Moody, professor of Christian theology, Southern Seminary, Baptist Press has distributed to the Baptist state papers an additional statement by him on recent actions by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. See "Moody Theology Draws Arkansas Resolution," Baptist Record, Nov. 25, 1982.

Arkansas Baptists have charged me with heresy on the basis of the Baptist Faith and Message Statement of 1963, Article 5. The last two paragraphs of chapter 55 in my book, *The Word of Truth*, on which the charges are based, accept the Baptist Faith and Message Statement of 1963.

Arkansas Baptists know that I accepted the Baptist Faith and Message Statement of 1963 before the Southern Baptist Convention did. It is not as clear on the Trinity and the Kingdom of God as I would hope, but I can accept the rest of the statement now. That is far better than many of my accusers can do.

Arkansas Baptists should also know that I am the first person in the history of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary that has been required to sign twice the Abstract of Principles of 1858. That is the issue now with Dr. Roy Lee Honeycutt. This is creedalism at its worst.

Before I signed the Abstract of Principles the second time, I submitted a seven-page letter and a seven-page revision of the Abstract of Principles to both Dr. Duke K. McCall and Dr. Roy Lee Honeycutt on Feb. 8, 1980.

Article XIII of the Abstract of Principles of 1858 reads as follows: "The Perseverance of the Saints.

"Those whom God hath accepted in the Beloved and sanctified by His Spirit, will never totally, or finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end; and though they may fall, through neglect and temptation, into sin, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the church and temporal judgement upon themselves, yet they shall be renewed again unto repentance and be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."

My letter of understanding to Dr. Duke K. McCall and to Dr. Roy Lee Honeycutt on Feb. 8, 1980, explained why there is one mistranslation of scripture, three deviations from scripture, and one contradiction of scripture in Article XIII.

My explanations on Article XIII said, "Article XIII of the Abstract of Principles of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary can hardly be 'in accordance with and not contrary to' Article I."

Article I says, "The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God and are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience." It is surprising that Article XIII has gone unchallenged so long in the light of Article I with which I agree with no reservations whatsoever.

Article XIII speaks of "those whom God has accepted in the Beloved," but this is the mistranslation of Ephesians 1:6, the authorized King James Version. It should read, "Which He freely bestowed upon us in the Beloved" (American Standard Version).

Article XII says that "sanctification is progressive," but Article XIII speaks of those "sanctified by His Spirit." This sounds like punctiliar sanctification in the past rather than progressive sanctification of the present. Hebrews 12:14-17 exhorts us to "follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord; looking carefully, lest there be any man that falleth short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby the many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one mess of meat sold his own birthright. For ye know that even when he afterward desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place for a change of mind (repentance) in his father, though he sought it diligently with tears."

Article XIII seems to say that one can "fall away from a state of grace" but "never totally nor finally," but Galatians 5:4 identifies those who "are fallen from grace" with those who are severed from Christ (American Standard Version). A. T. Robertson says that severance from Christ means "to make null and void." His comment on Galatians 5:4 says: "Paul does not mince words and carries the logic to the end of the course. He is not, of course, speaking of occasional sins, but he has in mind a more serious matter, that of abandoning the Christian as the agent of salvation." As usual, he (Robertson) is precisely correct, but Southern Baptists have not read him carefully. The Calvinistic tyranny of tradition still twists Scripture. This is said only of those who persevere to the end. Of course, all who persevere to the end will be saved (Mark 13:13). Compare Revelation 13:10, 14:12 (New American Standard Bible).

Article XIII does not speak of those who did not persevere as in Mark 4:17 and Luke 8:13, but it does say some "may fall through neglect and temptation, into sin." Galatians 6:1 says a man overtaken in a trespass should be restored, but this is not called a falling "out of grace" as in Galatians 5:4. When Article XIII speaks of those who "grieve the Spirit" the language

is from Isaiah 63:10 where the reference is to the wilderness generation that perished. Grieving the Spirit is mentioned in no other places in the Bible, so Ephesians 4:30 most likely has Isaiah 63:10 in mind.

The reference to "temporal judgments" agrees with I Corinthians 5:5 and 11:30-32, but the last statement added to the Westminster Confession of 1647 by the Elder William Collins of Petty France Church in London, when he worked it over in the second London Confession of 1677, is a collision with Hebrews 6:4-6. It is not difficult to see this when the two are compared:

Elder Collins: "Yet they shall be renewed again unto repentance." Hebrews 6:4-6, American Standard Version: "It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance."

What in other points was an uneasy brush with the Bible has become a Bang-on collision.

If confessions are to be used, Article XI of the New Hampshire Confession of 1833 is far better, which says: "We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; and their persevering attachment to Christ is a grand mark that distinguishes them from mere ('superficial' in the 1853 edition) believers; that a special providence watches over their welfare and (that) they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Better still are the original documents of the Scriptures given by inspiration of God. To the Scriptures alone is my conscious completely captive." Article I of the Abstract of Principles takes precedence over all that follows.

Now suddenly on Nov. 1, 1982, in order to get on record that he asked me for my resignation before the Arkansas Baptists did on Nov. 17, 1982, Dr. Roy Lee Honeycutt writes:

"Should you decide to implement your resignation, to be effective Dec. 31, 1982, I need to receive your notice no later than Friday, Nov. 5, 1982. If you choose to reject this option of resignation (or retirement), it will be imperative for me to consider other options available to the President as we move to resolve the current problem."

I did not receive that letter until Nov. 8. I have not resigned and do not plan to retire under pressure.

My defense is based on Articles I and XVIII of the Abstract of Principles of 1858, which say:

Article I.—The Scriptures: The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God and are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience.

Article XVIII.—Liberty of Conscience: "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He had left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in anything contrary to His Word, or not contained in it (the Word of God)."

I believe every word of Articles I and XVIII of the Abstract of Principles of 1858, so I am unable to accept any statement which does not agree with them.

If Arkansas Baptists are looking for heresy, they can find it in the largest Baptist church in Little Rock, Arkansas. I have before me the sermon of Dr. W. O. Vaught preached against me on Oct. 22, 1982. He proclaimed the eternal security of believers who have become atheists and unbelievers. Hundreds and perhaps thousands of these tapes were sent out to stir up opposition to me.

Here are his exact words: "The approach of experience says this, that even though you sin, and you even get to the place where you say 'I'll never go to church again. I'll never read the Bible again. I don't believe in God anymore,' the Bible says that you can't undo your salvation even if you do that." As he continues, he says, "If we believe not (you come to the place where you say 'I don't believe anymore. I'm not going anymore. I'm an unbeliever now. I renounce it.),' notice what he says. 'If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful. He cannot deny Himself. He never has. He never will. He can't deny when he said 'No one can take them out of my hands.' It can't be done."

I believe in the security of believers as long as they are still believers, but I do not believe in the eternal security of those believers who become atheists and unbelievers. For believers to become atheists and unbelievers would be apostasy for which there is no remedy according to Hebrews 6:4-6, 10:26-31, 12:14-17.

Dr. W. O. Vaught seems to think that he is the Ayatollah of Arkansas who can put his own words above the Word of God. I think this is downright heresy.

I do not intend to resign or retire until it is mandatory, if this kind of pressure continues. I understand that the mandatory date for my retirement under the contract when I became 65 is July 31, 1985. I had thought I would retire July 31, 1983, but I believe this would be unfair to my students, my colleagues, and to the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and even to the Southern Baptist Convention, all of which I love dearly. I regard this as intimidation and panic, so I intend to remain steadfast and, if necessary, appeal my case all the way to the Association of Theological Schools.

capsules

Minister defies IRS

PLATTSBROUGH, Neb. (EP)—The minister who went to jail for defying state teacher certification rules is disputing an Internal Revenue Service finding that he owes \$1,805 in personal income taxes.

"The claim of the IRS is unjust, and we've told them so," said Everett Sileven, pastor of the Faith Baptist Church, which runs the Faith Christian School. Under an agreement with the Cass County District Court, Mr. Sileven is free while the Legislature meets in a special budget-cutting session. The preacher hopes the lawmakers also will consider the issue of the Louisville, Neb., church's school, which he maintains should be exempt from certification regulations.

Cass County records show the IRS filed a lien May 3 against property owned by Sileven. Sileven said he has moved to strip himself of financial assets to counter charges that he was operating the church and school for personal gain.

Landes returns

DALLAS, Texas (BP)—James Landes, the 70-year-old executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, returned to work Nov. 15 after collapsing Nov. 9 during the BGCT's annual meeting in Corpus Christi.

Doctors hospitalized Landes after noting "cardiac abnormalities" when he was taken to the emergency room after becoming ill at a reception in his honor. Later tests uncovered no indication of heart problems and doctors decided Landes was suffering from a "chemical imbalance."

He was released from Corpus Christi Spohn Hospital on Nov. 11 and returned to his home near Dallas. He attended services at his home church, First Baptist Church of Richardson, the following Sunday and was back at work Monday.

He will retire from his job of nine years on Dec. 31.

Crouch arrested

MARINA DEL RAY, Calif. (EP)—Grammy Award-winning gospel singer Andrae Crouch was arrested November 12 and booked for investigation of possession of cocaine, authorities said.

Crouch, 40, was stopped on the Marina Freeway in Marina del Rey, Calif., by Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies who said he was driving erratically. A small amount of white powder and a 5-inch plastic straw were found in the car, Sgt. Steve Finley said. Crouch was jailed but later was released on \$2,500 bond, the sergeant said.

"Taxi" protested

TUPELO, Miss. (EP)—The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America has asked Donald Wildmon of Tupelo, the head of the Coalition for Better Television to join in protesting two recent episodes of the NBC program Taxi. The programs aired October 21 and 28, featured a priest recommending adultery as a means of reconciling a marriage. "The programs were a vicious mockery of Christianity," stated Wildmon, a United Methodist minister who heads the coalition. "They were repulsive, tasteless, and insulting not only to members of the Greek Orthodox Church but to every Christian."

Missionaries must go

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (EP)—Three missionaries working among the Orang Asli, Malaysia's indigenous tribal people, were given ten days to leave the area in which they were found. The Orang Asli Affairs Department said the Christian workers, whose organization was not disclosed, had no permission to work in the two settlements in Payang, a West Malaysian state, where an investigating team from the department and the district security committee found them.

Wallace Johnson speaks at banquet for Parchman ministry

Wallace E. Johnson, the retired president of Holiday Inns, told about 125 supporters of Parchman Prison Ministry last week that they were making history in establishing a ministry at Mississippi's penitentiary. He noted that it takes \$30,000 to \$40,000 to keep a prisoner at Parchman for a year and that 75 to 80 percent of them return to the prison after their release. By making an effort to transform the lives of the prisoners and keep them out of the penitentiary Mississippi Baptists would be saving the state a great deal of money and making history in the process, Johnson said.

He asked the group to pray for the

Meet to focus on preaching

A preaching conference is set for Dec. 13-14 at Southside Church, Jackson. The conference will focus on preparation and delivery of Bible preaching. Sessions will deal with biblical preaching from the books of the Bible and from the parables, legitimate shortcuts in sermon preparation, and planning for and giving an effective invitation. The registration fee is \$10 per person which includes a meal. The program begins at 2 p.m. Dec. 13, and concludes at 3:30 p.m. the next day.

Richardson resigns at Gulf Coast JC

Robbie Richardson is resigning January 1 as associate Baptist Student Union director at Gulf Coast Junior College to join her husband Jimmy as he enters doctoral studies at Iowa State University in Ames. She worked at the Jeff Davis campus of GCJC. Director Tim Thomas leads at the Perkins campus. And associate director Charlie Boudreaux works at the Jackson County campus.

prisoners and to establish a Christian group in every town to keep up with released prisoners. He said they need to know that civilization is accepting them back.

The supporters were meeting in a downtown hotel. Other speakers were Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and Herbert L. Tanner, a Memphis advertising executive.

The banquet meeting was aimed at helping provide support for the building of a Baptist equipping center just outside the grounds at Parchman, where the main thrust of the ministry will be with penitentiary staff people and their families. It is a ministry of Sunflower Association, the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and the Home Mission Board.

Member of Highland

Carroll Jackson of Jackson was a member of Highland Church, Jackson, rather than First Church, Jackson, as was noted in a recent story concerning his death. The elder Jackson was the father of Richard Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix Church, Phoenix, Ariz.

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The Clean Energy People

Senior adults hold festival at 1st, Gulfport

A senior adult choir and handbell festival was held Nov. 18 at First Baptist Church, Gulfport, a first of its kind for that area of the state.

The festival was sponsored by Church Music and Church Training departments, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and was directed by Perry Robinson of Ellisville, handbell consultant.

Of the 173 persons attending, 125 participated in the program. The senior adult handbell group that performed was from First Baptist Church, Gulfport. Four senior adult choirs sang. They were from First Church, Picayune; First Church, Gulfport; Petal-Harvey Church; and First Church, Pascagoula. First Church, Gulfport, served refreshments.

"Singing tree" at Alta Woods

Alta Woods Baptist Church, Jackson, will present its 3rd annual Singing Christmas Tree on Saturday, Dec. 18, at 7 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 19, at 6 p.m. in the sanctuary of the church. The tree will hold over 100 singers and will be accompanied by members of the Jackson Symphony.

Performances will be free, but to insure seating on Saturday, December 18, tickets are available from the church, said Gary Anglin, music director.

(Call 372-8651 for more information.) Charles Myers is pastor.

Suits project begins again

Mississippi Baptist Men's groups are again invited to participate in a special ministry offered to pioneers of Baptist work in the Northern Plains.

Each year, the Mississippi Baptist Brotherhood department sponsors a project that will supply about 70 new suits to pastors of churches in North and South Dakota and Montana.

Cost of each suit, which includes a shirt and tie, packaging and shipping, will cost approximately \$95. Checks may be made payable to "Suit Fund," Brotherhood department, Box 530, Jackson, Miss. 39205, phone 968-3800.

One letter from a past recipient said, "I just want to say thank you and the whole brotherhood of Mississippi for this. I don't know whether you are ready to believe this or not, but I haven't had a new suit since you gave me one three years ago. So please give my thanks to all. Merry Christmas and may God bless you all."

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Editorials

by don mcgregor

The needy around us

Most of us, we Southern Baptists in Mississippi, have very little opportunity to be in touch with those who are struggling in the morass of poverty. It is fine that very few of us are called on to live in those circumstances; and due to the fact that most of us don't live in poverty, we don't find it necessary to pay much attention to those who do.

That's all right. We all recognize that even though our financial circumstances, generally, are such that we can handle our obligations, there are still many conditions that weigh heavily upon us and keep our perspective from being as broad as could be desired.

We must not, however, forget those who are less fortunate.

As we are all aware, Mississippi ranks at the bottom of the list among the states in personal income. Southern Baptists make up a large portion of the state's population; and, as has been established, for the most part Southern Baptists are fairly comfort-

ably situated financially. That means that a sizeable portion of the state's population somehow manages to exist though living below the poverty level.

These statements are generalities, of course; and it must be understood that in a state such as ours there are undoubtedly Southern Baptists who are to be found living below the poverty level. For the most part, however, it would seem that the state's Southern Baptists are able to live in relative comfort.

As the Christmas season comes on, we begin to think of others. We begin to notice the circumstances that take their toll on those who generally, perhaps, we hardly have been aware of.

Beginning with this issue, the Baptist Record will be publishing what probably will be a two-part series on ministering to the less fortunate. We will be seeking to determine who they are, where they are, and, if possible, what to do. We will be looking at what

others are doing.

We can't erase poverty. If a sagging economy is causing a new wave of poverty dwellers, we can't do much about the economy. Perhaps, however, somehow we can make a dent in the situation. Whatever good can be accomplished will be worthwhile.

There is more to life than financial considerations and the circumstances that are dependent on finances, of course. The Master said, "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." We believe this. We work on ways of taking the Word of life to as many as we possibly can. We study church growth factors to determine what we can do to make our churches grow. The question to be answered is, do we seek church growth in order to bring life to those without it or in order to have a bigger and better functioning church.

We have found that churches grow faster when they are seeking to minister to homogeneous groups. That

means alike in nature, meaning that we search for new members who are somewhat the same as we are.

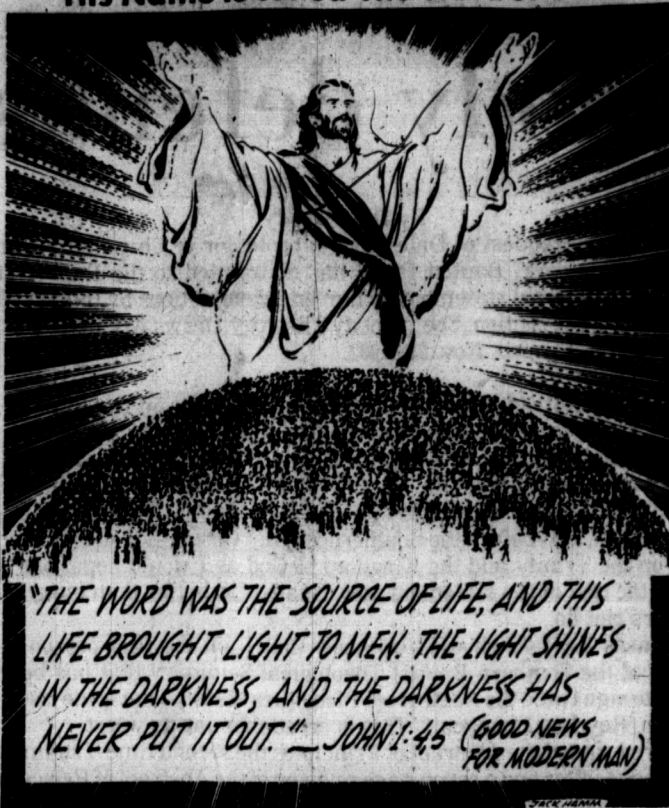
But what about those less fortunate people financially when it comes to sharing the Word of life with them. Maybe they won't come to our churches. For the most part, the Southern Baptist male wears a coat and tie to church on Sunday morning, and these folks may own neither a coat nor a tie. They would be out of place, and they know it.

But how many preaching points have we established in the areas where these people live?

We spend many, many millions to take the Word of life overseas. We are looking at a Foreign Mission Board budget for next year of well over \$90 million. And well we should. It takes that amount of money to get the job done, and we could use more.

But there are vast mission fields right across the tracks that could be reached with much less money.

"His Name is called The Word of God"



Faces And Places

Prayer requests

I have a letter from Mary Evelyn Divers, missionary in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She asked for prayer for Mrs. . . . Brummel, "a Dutch woman with cancer, mother of a friend of my daughter Ellen, a woman who claims no faith and never has for her children. Her husband heads a multinational company here. Last week I took her a Bible in Dutch (didn't see her because she had fever and pain). The Bible in her language made an impact, for her husband called me. She'll let me visit when she is up to visitors. Her daughter studied at Cambridge. Ellen witnessed to her here in school, and she visited our home several times." (John and Mary Evelyn Divers will be on furlough, beginning next April, in North Carolina. Ellen is now a sophomore at Westhampton College. Their son, Jeff, is a senior at University of Richmond. Their daughter, Betsy, is in fifth grade.)

Leon White, Buenos Aires, missionary from Alabama, is president of the Argentine Baptist Mission. When I asked him if he had a message from Mississippi Baptists, he said, "We need more missionaries in Argentina. Because of death or retirement or resignation, the number of Baptist missionaries here is down to almost half

what it was a few years ago. Pray that more Mississippi pastors—and others in Mississippi—will hear the call to come here on short term volunteer assignments—and that many of them will hear the call to come here to stay as career missionaries."

During a brief recess of the MasterLife conference held in Argentina in October, John McNair, Mississippi missionary to Uruguay, came walking across the green, flower-strewn campus of Villa Bautista, to greet me and to say, "Tell the people of Mississippi to keep praying for us. Tell them we know their prayers are heard." He said that in answer to prayer, he had obtained a teaching position at a government-owned university medical center in Montevideo, Uruguay. "It was a miracle," he declared. He promised to write the full story for the Baptist Record soon. "Tell them not just to say, 'Lord, bless all the missionaries,' but to keep praying specifically. We like to know that they are praying for John and Kathy, Heather and Mark McNair, in Montevideo, Uruguay."

Last week was the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions. But then shouldn't every week be a week of prayer?

Board elects officers, approves counseling

(Continued from page 1)

\$150,000 and the sites cost \$250,000—a total of \$400,000.

Two of the 24 new congregations are new missions. There are 3,434 members of the other 22 churches, they have baptized 1,945, total receipts have been \$9,543,889, total mission expenditures have been \$1,069,115, and Cooperative Program gifts have been \$632,781.

The next two congregations to get mobile chapels will be Faith Church, Wayne Association, and Carnes Mission, Lebanon Association.

A Cooperative Program feature was presented under the direction of John Alexander, director of the Department of Stewardship and Cooperative Program Promotion.

Committee structures were estab-

lished by the board during its meeting.

Members of the Budget and Cooperative Program Promotion Committee are Ingram Foster, Bartis Harper, Powell Ogletree, Jimmy Vance, Schuyler Batson, and James Webster.

Members of the New Church Expansion Committee are Leo Barker, Joe Ratoliff, Mrs. William Patterson, W. L. Compere, Charles Bass, and James T. Bryant.

Members of the Assembly and Camp Program Committee are Anthony Kay, Larry Otis, Milton Koon, Louis Smith, Elise Curtis, and Ed Gandy.

Members of the Church-Minister Relations Advisory Committee are Ronnie Massey, William Waddle, W. A. Fordham, Eugene Turner, Charles Bagwell, and Charles Dill.

century.

If we are to do this we will need people, and we will need money. If the money were to become available, it is more than likely that the people would become available also.

There is no way of knowing precisely how much the total gifts of Mississippi Baptists would be increased if all were tithers, but it is not hard to image that the increase would be something akin to six fold. This would finance a lot of witnessing.

The convention, in adopting the resolution on tithing, also adopted the following suggestions for Mississippi Baptists:

Each church to support the tithing emphasis in prayer.

Each church to have an emphasis on tithing.

Sunday School teachers to teach special tithing lessons.

Pastors to preach sermons on tithing.

Parents to teach their children to tithing.

Every Baptist to give at least a tithe through the church.

Also the convention asked the Baptist Record to "call on church lay leaders to support a tithing emphasis in the churches during the year."

This we plan to do.

Kelly sees inflexible element in SBC life

Southern Baptists on the extreme right side of the debate going on within their ranks are completely inflexible and are seeking to impose conditions that cannot be met, Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, told board members last week during their post convention organizational meeting.

Kelly had shortly before returned from a meeting in Dallas set up by SBC President Jimmy Draper that had included 40 Southern Baptists from all segments of their political spectrum.

Those right-wing Baptists are leaving their agenda hidden, Kelly continued. Yet they want to write the agenda for everyone else, he said, and they declare that all must be in total agreement or insist that the detractors are in error.

"The denomination that becomes great has an attitude of forgiving on minor points of theology," Kelly de-

clared. "Harmony demands diversity," he said.

Those right-wing Baptists are demanding what they call parity, he added, and want their position to be taught on all campuses, though they have not explained their position, he said. He pointed out that one seminary president (Honeycutt) had publicly rejected parity because, he declared, he wasn't going to hire a liberal in order to achieve it.

Kelly expressed appreciation to Mississippi Baptists because, he said, there is not the disunity to be found in this state that is troubling Southern Baptists. Mississippi Baptists are diverse but not divided, he noted.

"We can't get off track," he said. "I believe in prayer for solving problems. We must bring people back to their main task and stop this squabbling which I believe, primarily, is over prestige and power," he concluded.

West Virginia adds out-of-state churches

By Craig Bird

PARKERSBURG, W. Va. (BP)—The West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists has reached beyond the state borders to accept two Virginia churches and a Kentucky church as members.

Also at the annual meeting of the WVCSB, messengers adopted the convention's first \$1 million budget, \$1,009,169. Southern Baptist Convention agencies will provide \$576,879 of that amount, most coming from the Home Mission Board with other support from the Baptist Sunday School Board and the Woman's Missionary Union.

West Virginia will send 22.5 percent of the \$97,264 given by local congregations to worldwide causes of the SBC Cooperative Program down from 25.5 percent last year.

The Virginia churches, Old Forrest Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, and Barboursville Baptist Church in Barboursville, were accepted as full members while an independent church in Louisville, Ky., Christ Is King Baptist Church, was accepted under watchcare with a final decision on membership to be made at the 1983 convention.

Five churches in West Virginia also were accepted as members—four former chapels that had constituted into churches and Highlawn Baptist Church in Huntington, the largest American Baptist Church in the state, became dually aligned.

The Louisville congregation, which is not a member of either the Kentucky Baptist Convention or the Long Run Baptist Association (Louisville), was first accepted into full membership but a motion to reconsider was introduced at a later business session.

Eventually the 250 messengers voted unanimously to put the church on watchcare status in order to acquire more information, according to Jack Walls, editor of the West Virginia Southern Baptist.

The two Virginia churches applied for membership several months ago but Christ Is King church's application was not received until just before the convention opened. The church did not have any messengers present, Walls said.

Two of the pastors of the out-of-state churches said mission opportunities in West Virginia motivated them to seek alignment with the West Virginia convention while the third said the abortion policy of Virginia Baptist Hospital caused his church to join WVCSB.

"We have our first mission trip up there planned for next week," said Art Ballard, pastor of Old Forrest Road Baptist Church. "We have been giving through the West Virginia convention for quite a while and I am excited about the leadership in West Virginia and the opportunities for direct mission work for our members here." Ballard announced last year he

would lead his church out of the Baptist General Association of Virginia after that state convention voted to make gifts through to the Cooperative Program the sole basis for messenger qualification.

"We will remain dually aligned with the Virginia convention and keep sending a little money there," Ballard said. He said he had no desire to lead his church out of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Thomas Riner, a Kentucky state legislator, said he decided to sign up his independent church with a state convention after hearing "that many West Virginia counties don't have a single Southern Baptist church." He said Ballard and Floyd Tidworth, director of missions, stewardship and Brotherhood for the WVCSB, called him and, in the three-way conversation, asked him to apply for membership.

Christ Is King Baptist Church meets in Riner's home in Louisville.

Although his church has been independent, Riner is no stranger to the Southern Baptist Convention. At the 1980 SBC meeting in St. Louis he and his wife, Claudia, were disqualified as messengers when it was discovered they were "not in friendly cooperation or sympathetic with the purposes" of the denomination as required in the SBC bylaws.

The Riners signed forms indicating their church (Logos Baptist Church)

had contributed \$2,300 to convention causes in 1979 and was eligible for the maximum 10 messengers—but C. R. Daley, editor of the Kentucky Baptist state newspaper, the Western Record, told the credentials committee the Kentucky Baptist Convention had no record of the contribution.

Six other messengers registered from Logos Baptist Church and all the cards had been signed by Claudia Riner as church clerk. Two messengers from Christ Is King Baptist Church had registered with cards signed by Mrs. Riner. At the time Riner was pastor of both congregations.

The Riners were requested to appear before the SBC credentials committee but failed to do so. Daley said Christ Is King church has been making contributions to the Kentucky Baptist Convention and was eligible to join the Kentucky Baptist Convention but had declined to do so.

Wayne Huckaby, pastor at Barboursville, said his church "couldn't in good conscience see God's money going to Virginia Baptist Hospital and funding abortions—even though the policy has been changed so that it is not 'abortion on demand'—the policy is still not acceptable."

Tidworth pointed out that several churches in West Virginia are aligned with either the Virginia convention or the Maryland Convention of Baptists.

(Bird is BP feature editor.)

Letters to the Editor

Gives pastor to missions

Editor:

As we approach this week of Prayer for Foreign Missions and the Lottie Moon Christmas offering this will be a very special time for our church this year. We are giving our pastor, Larry Booth, and wife, Linda, to foreign missions.

They have been appointed by the Foreign Mission Board for service in Colombia, South America, after an additional year of training at Southeastern Seminary in North Carolina and another year of language studies in San Jose, Costa Rica.

We love them and will miss them. But we are just Praising the Lord because we know it is God's will for us and them.

We Thank God for the fields that are white and black, brown, and yellow awaiting harvest.

Pray for us as we seek God's man as our new pastor.

Mrs. Janice Buchanan
W.M.U. President
Cascilla Baptist Church
Cascilla, MS.

Extortion letter racket

Editor:

My message to you is short. I request that in an issue of the Record you use the largest headline that is ever used by you. Many churches of the west have secured thousands of individual names. There are attractive offers to the individual who will remit \$18 or some ask for double that amount. For three months or longer I have been getting two letters per week and have had two in one mail delivery. I trust many friends in Mississippi will be on guard. Your Record could save thousands if they should appear to be approaching a trap.

I was a rural carrier at Bogue Chitto, Mississippi 82 to 84 miles six days each week for 48 years. I learned the racket.

Carey J. Wooley
Los Angeles, CA

Appreciation for article

Editor:

Please thank Rev. W. L. Moore for his opinion, "Let's reverse this trend." As we enter his sanctuary (holy place—refuge) we bring our joys as well as our sorrows. We pray that our joys may be deepened, our sorrows healed—and our faith sustained. We draw aside from the clamor of the secular to the closeness and awareness of God's presence in this very special place.

May God help us to put our priorities in order.
Mrs. J. C. (Kathryn) Jones
Mendenhall, MS

Minister in Alaska

Editor:

We are in need of a bi-vocational minister of music/youth for the First Baptist Church of Sitka, Alaska.

Sitka is a beautiful township on the Island of Baranof in Southeast Alaska, population of approximately 8,500 people. The major industry is commercial fishing and lumber products. Our church is running around 65-80 in Sunday School with a potential of doubling the current enrollment.

We were wondering if you could publish our need in your state newspaper. Interested parties should send resume and enquiries to Bill Branch, Pastor, P. O. Box 847, Sitka, AK 99835.

Bill Branch, Pastor
First Baptist Church
Sitka, Alaska

Writer not alone

Editor:

A recent letter to the editor reflected a writer's concern about pastors and especially those "who have replaced the gospel with plain garbage."

That writer is not alone. There are others who feel as he does, but are afraid to speak out. However, I believe the tide is turning, and Christians will let their stand be known.

It's disheartening for Christians to be abused from the pulpit. God is not going to let his people be misled by pastors who water down his word. A pastor who resorts to his way rather than God's way must and should be fired.

Name withheld
by editor

The Baptist Record

(ISSN-0005-5778)

515 Mississippi Street

Box 530

Jackson, Miss. 39205

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The Mississippi Baptist Convention

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The Baptist Building
Box 530, Jackson, Miss. 39205

Baptist Record Advisory Committee: Marvin Finch, Meridian, chairman; Jack Henderson, Cleveland; Tom Nelson, Jackson; vice-chairman; James Jackson, Columbia; Robert H. Jackson, Brandon; Don Thompson, Ackerman; Ex. office, John Kays, secretary.

Subscription: \$2.00 a year payable in advance. Published weekly except week of July 4 and Christmas.

Second Class Postage paid at Jackson, Miss.

Postmaster: Record is a member of the Southern Baptist Press Association.



Magnolia Street Baptist Church, Jones County, recently dedicated its new facilities on Wansley Road in Laurel. This congregation has moved its entire plant across town.

Church moves across town

Six years ago the Magnolia Street Baptist Church, Laurel, bought 20 acres located on Wansley Road with a view to relocating at some time in the future. The land was utilized for a period of time by placing a mobile chapel on loan from the Mississippi Baptist Convention there as an extension of the parent church.

Earlier this summer the first phase of the building program was completed and the congregation moved into its new plant. Recently the sanctuary was dedicated, and an open house was held.

Frank Harmon, former pastor, who led the church to purchase the land, brought the dedication sermon. Also participating in the service was Ray Grissett, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board employee, who served as interim pastor and who assisted the church in developing its satellite program.

David Sellers, the present pastor, led in the financial and building program.

"The church is very anxious to enter into the second stage of the building program," said Sellers. "Additional space is already urgently needed."

Homecomings



LEBANON BAPTIST CHURCH, TIPPAH COUNTY, held an old-fashioned day on a recent homecoming Sunday. One group of men got ready for the occasion by growing beards and dressing in overalls and "old-timey" hats. They were Glen Mauney, Chuck Mauney, Keith Stokes, Herman Sims, Charlie Paeur, Bud Reaves, pastor, Oscar Stewart, Ricky Richardson, Alvis Gates, Donnie Stokes, Steve Walker, Bennie Mauney, and Jerry Ralph.

Jones County BSU recently sponsored an "Ugly Boy" contest as one of its activities to raise money for student summer missions. John Stroud received the "honor" of winning, as he was the person who raised most money—\$50.55. Mission Emphasis Week was held on the Jones County JC campus Nov. 15-19, with home, foreign, and student missionaries as speakers.

George E. Capps Jr., associate executive director of the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, has received the first E. Y. Mullins Human Relations award from the American Baptist College of the American Baptist Theological Seminary (ABTS). ABTS is a predominantly black school sponsored jointly by the Southern Baptist Convention and the National Baptist Convention of the U.S.A., Inc. for the training of ministers and church-related workers. The award honors Mullins, former president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., and the Southern Baptist Convention (1921-24), who was instrumental in the founding of American Baptist Theological Seminary. Odell McClinton, Sr., ABTS president, said the award committee searched for someone who embodied the spirit of Mullins and shared his dream for the institution.

Jerry Stevens, director of missions, Winston County, has been invited to teach the January Bible Study in two Baptist churches in Montana.

In The News...



GOOD HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH, NEAR LENA, presented perfect attendance pins to seven of its Sunday School members recently. They were, front row: DENA McCORRY, one year pin; BOWSER JOHNSTON, one year; Row 2: PAUL McDONALD, two year pin; BELINDA McCORRY, one year; RANDELL SMITH, one year; HUGH McDONALD, Sunday School director, two years; MRS. WILLIE MAE NUTT, seven years.

David W. Aultman was on Oct. 31 presented a license to preach. Douglas E. Benedict, Sr. made the presentation at Calvary Baptist Church, Lamar Association. Aultman, son of Mr. and Mrs. James A. Aultman, Hattiesburg, has been a member of Calvary since 1972. He is a senior at University of Southern Mississippi.

Ray Frank Robbins, professor at New Orleans Seminary, will teach I John at White Oak Baptist Church, Smith County, on Friday, Dec. 10, from 7 to 9 p.m. and again on Saturday, Dec. 11, from 7 to 9 p.m. Also he will preach at White Oak Sunday, Dec. 12. James Fulton is the pastor.

Mexicans build after hurricane

LOS MOCHIS, Mexico (BP)—Members of Cinco de Mayo Baptist Church near Los Mochis, Mexico, know how to make the best of bad situations.

For the five years before Hurricane Lidia devastated Los Mochis, the mission, made up mostly of women and children, had struggled to survive.

But when the men of the community saw how Baptists pitched in to help in the wake of Lidia's 1981 assault on Los Mochis they became willing to listen to the Baptist message. Attendance escalated and church membership multiplied rapidly. A few months after Lidia the mission organized as Mexico's first Mayo Indian Baptist Church.

When Hurricane Paul hit this fall, damaging the roof and buckling one wall, the church decided to take advantage of the storm's demolition work. Attendance sometimes was hitting 300—more than the building could hold—so instead of repairing the latest hurricane damage church members are enlarging the entire church building.

Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can. —John Wesley
At the profoundest depths in life, men talk not about God, but with him. —D. Elton Trueblood

Devotional Mighty God

By Dennis L. Johnsey, pastor, First, Summit
"He shall be called...mighty God" (Isaiah 9:6).

The apostle Matthew records that the name of the Messiah would be called Emmanuel, Christ, and Jesus. These three express the essential mystery, meaning, and message of the Incarnation. Isaiah shares this message centuries before, and one characteristic he gives of him is "mighty God."

If Jesus is only a creature, there is nothing in the Christmas story to command astonishment of the human intellect. If he is the mighty God, then there is a union between creator and creature. This is the miracle of miracles.

It is the fundamental interpretation of things, compared with which the splitting of the atom, man on the moon, and computer chips are merely infinitesimal incidents. Today millions everywhere long for release from their ant hill existence—and the opportunity is here. Mighty God has come.

During the first World War, the King of England, King George V, sent out to his friends a New Year's card which had on it the drawing of an open gate. Beneath it was this message:

"And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: 'Give me a light, that I may tread safely into the unknown.'"

"The man at the gate replied, 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That will be better for you than a light and safer for you than seeing the way.'"

The only way to get the power out of a battery is to connect it with something that can use its power. Flashlights won't work unless they have batteries. The power of a mighty God comes out when we allow him to come in. This is indeed the Christmas story. We are helpless without a mighty God. Isaiah said he is coming. The New Testament says he has come. Let us rejoice and take his hand.

Bible Book

Paul's final plea

By Gene Henderson, pastor,
Fairview, Columbus
II Cor. 12:14-15; 13:1-11

The tone of II Corinthians 10-13 is decidedly different from the earlier chapters; the appeal, however, has not changed. Paul pleaded for the Corinthians to reciprocate his love and respond to his authority. In view of his impending third visit Paul wrote to express gratitude for response of the majority of the church but also to counsel the minority to become obedient so that he would not need to be severe with them.

I. Paul's compassion and concern (II Cor. 12:14-15)

In his previous ministry at Corinth Paul had refused to accept financial support. He made it clear that this position would remain on his third visit (12:14). It was not because the Corinthians were not able or inferior (12:13), but because the apostle loved them and wanted to protect his witness among them. Never had Paul deceived them or taken advantage of them as his detractors had claimed nor had any of Paul's associates acted otherwise (12:17-18).

On the contrary, Paul looked upon them as his children. Children are not supposed to provide for the parents but parents are responsible for the children (12:14). Paul was willing to be totally expended in time, energy and resources in behalf of the Corinthians (12:15). Since Paul loved the Corinthians to this extent, he asked if their response was proper. The Corinthians ought to have reciprocated his love (12:15b). Paul did not seek the material goods of the Corinthians but their love and devotion (12:14).

The Corinthians might well have interpreted Paul's discussion as a defense of himself. Paul corrected any such misunderstanding. His purpose in exhorting the Corinthians was for their benefit. God knew the truth in Paul's heart that his main concern was the edification of the Corinthians (12:19). He feared that their immaturity had continued evidenced by the signs of party-spirits, politics, and pride (12:20). Worse, Paul feared that immaturity still might exist which would create doubt about their conversion and cause the apostle to mourn (12:21).

II. Paul's commitment to exercise authority (13:1-4)

When Paul arrived on the third visit, he apparently intended to convene a hearing to judge the charges made against him and perhaps also the accusations reported to him about the Corinthians. At least two witnesses

would be necessary to confirm a charge (13:1). On the occasion of the "painful visit," Paul had warned the Corinthians that when he came again he would deal strictly with those disobedient and unrepentant. He reaffirmed that commitment (13:2).

The Corinthians had misinterpreted the patience of Paul, even as those who crucified Jesus had misunderstood his submissiveness to the cross. Just as Jesus was raised by the power of God and given dominion, Paul had been commissioned with authority and power. Those who doubted Paul's authority would soon experience it to their woe (13:3). None would be spared if it became necessary for Paul to exercise his authority. Paul preferred to use the power given him for the building up of the church; not destruction (cf. 10:8; 13:10).

III. Paul's call for self examination (13:5-11)

Rather than judging him, Paul exhorted the Corinthians to examine themselves and to make up that which was deficient in their own spiritual life. Proper examination would reveal that their attitude toward him was not in keeping with the faith they professed. Two words were used to emphasize their need of introspection (13:5). The first word could mean "to tempt" or "to test." The second word conveyed the idea of approval following testing. If the Corinthians examined themselves and were approved before God, they would be in no danger of Paul's severity. Paul was confident that he stood approved by God (13:6).

It was more important to Paul that the Corinthians conform to their confession of faith than for attention to focus upon him as one of authority. He prayed for the obedience of the Corinthians even if it meant that he would not have the occasion to vindicate his authority but remain untested or unapproved (13:7). Paul would only exercise his authority for the furtherance of the gospel, not for personal approval. He was content for his authority to remain questionable if the Corinthians were obedient (strong) and restored that which was lacking in their spiritual life so that they would be complete (13:9).

The last thing the apostle desired was confrontation with the rebellious minority. He urged the Corinthians to rectify things before he came because he did not want to be severe with them in the use of his authority (13:10). He pleaded with them (13:11) to make up their deficiencies (be made complete), to heed his exhortation.

Uniform

Birth announcement

By Charles S. Davis, associate
professor of Bible, MC
Luke 1:39-56

In one of the early episodes of the television show *All in the Family*, Archie Bunker exhibits his prejudice against Jews. Hoping to turn him from his anti-Semitic attitude, someone reminds Archie, "You know that Jesus was a Jew, don't you?" In typical fashion Archie brashly replies, "Yes, but only on his mother's side."

In his crass and prejudiced way, Archie Bunker was giving voice to what Christians have affirmed from the days of the early church—the supernatural conception of Jesus and his virgin birth. A young Jewish maiden named Mary was his mother, but God was his father. Jesus is God's Son in an ultimate and unique sense, different from any other person who has ever lived. Jesus was not just a good man who became God; he was the good God who became man.

I. Mary marvels at the announcement (1:26-38)

In Matthew's account of the virgin birth, the story revolves around Joseph and his problem of how to deal with the pregnancy of his intended bride. In Luke's gospel, Mary is the center of attention. The description of Mary is intended to bring out two ideas: Mary was still a virgin, and she was betrothed to Joseph. Betrothal was a much more serious matter than modern engagements. It lasted for a year and could only be dissolved by divorce.

When the angel appeared to Mary in her hometown of Nazareth and announced that she was to be the mother of a son named Jesus, she was shocked. Of course, the greatest favor that a Jewish maiden could anticipate was the privilege of being the Messiah's mother. But even though she was legally betrothed, Mary did not live with Joseph. So naturally she responded, "How can I have a baby since I have no husband?" (1:34).

Mary's troubled reaction to the angel's announcement brings her additional reassurance. She is told not to fear, for God has selected her for the honor for which so many Jewish women had prayed. The news of the pregnancy of her kinswoman Elizabeth is further evidence of God's power to do the impossible. Elizabeth was too old to have a child, but God made it possible. He would work an even greater miracle through Mary. Mary humbly submitted to the will of God in her life.

II. Mary makes a visit to Elizabeth (1:39-45)

Mary responds to the angel's revelation by going hurriedly to visit Elizabeth, a journey of about 75 miles or so. Although she apparently believed the angel's message, Mary wants personally to verify the fact of Elizabeth's pregnancy. When she arrives at the home of Elizabeth and her husband Zechariah, she greets Elizabeth—probably with news of the family and of her experience with the angel.

When Elizabeth hears the greeting she is already six months pregnant (with John the Baptist). At the sound of Mary's voice the unborn child moves in Elizabeth's womb. In a loud voice of excitement and enthusiasm, Elizabeth affirms what God was doing in Mary's life.

Tom Hudson has summarized well the response of Elizabeth: (1) She affirmed God's purpose for Mary as being a blessing (1:42). (2) She affirmed that Mary's child was indeed the Son of God (1:43). (3) She commended Mary's faith, and assured her that God will do what he says he will do (1:45).

III. Mary magnifies the Lord (1:46-56)
Mary gave expression to her happiness in a beautiful song of praise. The song is often called "The Magnificat," based on the first word in the song in the Latin version. Mary must have been reared in a godly home, for her song reflects a knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures. Mary's song follows the pattern of the song of Hannah, the mother of Samuel (see I Samuel 2:1-10).

The first part of Mary's song (1:46-50) is an expression of praise for personal blessings. God in his grace and in his mercy has chosen her, a girl of low economic and social standing, to be the mother of the Messiah.

The second part of the song (1:51-55) describes the significance for Israel of God's great act. In these verses Mary uses past tense verbs to describe future events. She is so sure that God will do what he promises that she speaks of God's faithfulness as an accomplished fact. In these verses Mary represents a humble and oppressed people. It is the Jewish nation that, in the person of Mary, gives birth to Jesus. What God has done for her he has done for Israel.

Unless a man undertakes more than he possibly can do, he will never do all he can do. Henry Dummmond

Jesus went about doing good. It is surprising how many of his followers are satisfied with just going about. Aya Kagawa

Life and Work

Faith and fellowship

By David McCubbin, associate
pastor, First, Meridian
James 5:7-11, 13-15, 19-20

The writer of this short book wanted his readers to become "perfect." That is he wanted them to develop into mature, complete Christians. The scripture passages chosen for this week's lesson give us three more areas where growth toward maturity should take place. These are patience, prayer and active compassion toward the fallen.

Our lesson subject is "Faith and Fellowship." The word fellowship is not found in these passages. It is fairly easy to see, however, that growth in patience, prayer and concern for the fallen will enhance the fellowship of believers.

Patience (7-11). The "therefore" in verse 7 tells us that the patience enjoined should be understood in the light of what comes before. In verses 1-6 James warned of judgement coming for those whose wealth and pleasure were derived from the unfair treatment of others. Their gain was obtained by trampling on others. A righteous person with convictions about right and wrong was powerless to resist. To counter the unscrupulous would put him in that same category and he couldn't bring himself to that. What can the righteous do? He can have patience and trust in the Lord who will vindicate the righteous and bring judgement upon the oppressor.

James told his readers, many of whom had experienced oppression and some were no doubt in dire circumstances, to be patient for the coming of the Lord was at hand. The particular word used for patience did not mean simply to endure. It carried the added meaning of enduring without complaint. James used examples of the Old Testament prophets and Job as men who suffered mistreatment and still endured. The word James used for their experience expressed endurance along with possible groaning and complaining. James urged his readers to go a step beyond—endure without complaining—but offered the added incentive—the coming of the Lord is close at hand.

Now, James believed that Christ's return was soon to be, as did most Christians of his day. Christ did not come then and we are still waiting for his appearing. The fact that he will come again says that he is ultimately in charge. Patience, because he is in charge, will eventually be rewarded.

Consider one other matter. James urged his readers not to allow their op-

pressed circumstances to cause them to take it out on fellow believers. There is a tendency for frustration and anger in one situation to be transferred to another and I think that is what James warned against.

Prayer (13-6). Perhaps the key statement in these verses is, "The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects" (v. 16b, RSV). The statement most familiar to us is, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (KJV). Prayer is a very powerful tool for it can move us into a position to be a part of God's beneficent plan, whatever that might be.

In the first of these passages, James in quick strokes touches on the prayer of petition, (the suffering, the afflicted are to pray), the prayer of praise and adoration (the cheerful are to sing praises), and the prayer of intercession ("call for the elders . . . and let them pray over him"). In the latter, James suggested anointing with oil in addition to prayer. Oil was used medicinally. The good Samaritan poured oil and wine in the wounds of the beaten man (Luke 10:34). Medical treatment and prayer go hand in hand for the healing of the sick.

Though not all sickness is due to sin, there are those instances where sin is responsible. In those instances, forgiveness of sin and healing are part of the same expression of answered prayer.

Compassion toward the fallen (19-20). From the beginning there have been those who have professed faith and then drifted or wandered away. Perhaps even back then the greater effort was made to win the lost with a lot less concern for conserving the results.

James wrote of Christians straying from their commitment (if any among you wanders . . .). To wander from the truth is sin. It is deadly and death dealing in the life of a Christian but not in the same way as in the life of a non-Christian. The phrase "will save his soul from death" to be consistent with other New Testament teaching was not talking about eternal damnation. Rather it suggested being outside of God's purpose, missing his blessings and failing to obtain the rewards God wants to give. One who brings the fallen one back makes it possible for God to forgive and forget the wanderer's sin and bestow again present and future blessings.

The difference between "somebody should" and "I will" is self-discipline. —Polyanna Sedzio